

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A test device for use in automated testing apparatus comprising:

a substrate of size and shape suitable for handling by said automated testing apparatus, and including at least one throughbore passing entirely through the substrate and said device, wherein said throughbore is a location, size and shape suited for access by said automatic testing apparatus; and further comprising supportive material mounted on at least a part of said substrate so as to be at least partially positioned over said throughbore; and wherein said supportive material comprises a guide means comprising a sample deposition portion that is wetted by a fluid sample, said sample deposition portion being within said throughbore and attached to a channel portion, said channel portion including an indicator means arranged therein at a predetermined lateral distance away from said sample deposition portion for indicating that the sample portion is entirely wetted so as to be used for testing by punching out at least a portion of the sample deposition portion ; wherein the positioning of the sample to be tested on said sample deposition portion of said supportive material results in excess fluid of said sample traveling along said channel portion and interacting with said indicator means to indicate that said sample deposition portion has been entirely wetted by the fluid sample so as to permit the excess fluid to travel along the channel portion and interact with the indicator means.
2. (original) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said supportive material is spaced from an outer most surface of said substrate.
3. (original) A test device according to Claim 1 or 2 wherein said supportive material is sandwiched between two substrates.

4. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 where said substrate is provided with a plurality of spaced first indentations or apertures.
5. (original) A test device according to Claim 4 wherein said first indentations or apertures are evenly space there apart.
6. (previously presented) A test device accordingly to Claim 1 comprising a holding means, wherein the handling of said test device by automated apparatus is facilitated.
7. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein at least a part of at least one surface of said supportive material is provided with a suitable hydrophobic material.
8. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 7 wherein said hydrophobic material is latex or wax.
9. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said substrate is provided with at least one second indentation or aperture suitably sized and shaped and positioned, with respect to said first aperture, so as to be aligned with said channel portion of said guide means.
10. (original) A test device according to Claim 9 wherein said indentation or aperture is positioned so as to be aligned with said indicator means.
11. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said indicator means is impregnated with, or cross-linked to, or coated onto, at least a part of at least one surface of said supportive material.

12. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said sample deposition portion is circular and the diameter of same is greater than the diameter of the first indentation or aperture.

13. (original) A test device according to Claim 12 wherein said sample deposition diameter is greater or in the region of 1 to 5mm.

14. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said supportive material, or at least a part of said supportive material, is adapted to efficiently and quickly distribute a fluid sample into at least a part of the supportive material or across at least part of said supportive material.

15. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said supportive material is absorbent in nature.

16. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said supportive material comprises a hydrophobic membrane.

17. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said supportive material is provided with colourmetric and/or fluorometric and/or luminometric and/or radiometric indicator means wherein fluid samples may be analyzed.

18. (previously presented) A test device according to Claim 1 wherein said device is provided with identification means.

19. (previously presented) A test kit comprising a combination of the test device according to claim 1 with a pouch that is of a size and shape of the test device.

20. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 19 further comprising a desiccant.

21. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 20 wherein said desiccant comprises at least a part of at least one surface of said test kit.

22. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claims 20 or 21 wherein said desiccant is provided on an inner surface of said test kit.

23. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 20 wherein said desiccant is provided on a surface of the test kit which is so sized and shaped so that when the test device is inserted into the test kit the supportive material contained in the test device is opposite, or adjacent, the desiccant.

24. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 20 wherein said desiccant comprises silica gel.

25. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 19 wherein at least a part of an outer surface of the test kit is made from impervious material..

26. (canceled)

27. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 25 comprising a means for obtaining a sample.

28. (original) A test kit according to Claim 27 wherein said means for obtaining a sample comprise a lance or blade, if a blood sample is required; a pipette if a saliva sample is required; and/or a container if a urine and/or stool sample is required.

29. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 26 comprising instructions and/or a bar code for identifying purposes.

30. (previously presented) A test kit according to Claim 29 wherein an identification means is provided to indicate the identity and origin of each individual test device, the type of test to be carried out and/or the particular shape of the test device whereby automated testing apparatus can be automatically re-configured following reading of the identification means to accommodate test devices of a variety of shapes and for a variety of tests.

31. (previously presented) A method for confirming the adequacy of a collected fluid sample using the test device according to Claim 1 comprising;

(i) providing a substrate of a suitable size and shape, and including at least one indentation or aperture is of a predetermined location, size and shape so as to facilitate handling by an automated testing apparatus; and further comprising a supportative material mounted on at least a part of said substrate so as to be at least partially positioned over said indentation or aperture; wherein said supportative material comprises a guide means comprising a sample deposition portion, and a channel portion attached thereto including an indicator means;

(ii) placing a fluid sample on said sample deposition portion and allowing said fluid sample to fill and/or permeate into said channel portion;

(iii) collecting sufficient fluid of said sample so that said sample passes over said indicator means in or associated with said channel portion; and

(iv) assessing said collected fluid sample by visualization of said indicator means and/or by automated machine analysis of said indicator means.